



# Stupak Takes Lead In Fighting Skyrocketing Gas Prices

WASHINGTON – As gasoline prices escalate, Congressman Bart Stupak has taken a lead role in Congress fighting for consumers and trying to alleviate motorists’ pain at the pump.

Stupak authored H.R. 3936, the Federal Response to Energy Emergencies (FREE) Act. That legislation would empower the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and Department of Justice to crack down on energy price gouging at all points in the energy supply chain. Currently, there is no definition of, nor federal standard for what constitutes gas price gouging. The FREE Act would instruct the FTC to develop a definition of price gouging, using a number of consumer friendly standards.

While House Democrats have been promoting the bill, the House Republican Majority Leadership has blocked the bill from going to the House floor for a vote. On April 19th, Stupak wrote the Speaker of the House, Dennis Hastert, to demand a floor vote on the FREE Act. Over 120 Democratic Representatives have signed a “discharge petition,” a rare parliamentary maneuver that would side step the Majority leadership and force the bill to the floor.

In addition to promoting the FREE Act to fight gas price gouging, Stupak has introduced a second bill to regulate the largely unregulated oil futures trading market.

There are currently two types of oil futures speculation. Most oil futures trading occurs “over-the-counter.” This trading is conducted “off market,” without any regulation or oversight by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

“Seventy-five percent of this vast oil futures market operates without transparency and without oversight,” Stupak said. “As fears about gas prices build, there is the potential for speculators to take advantage of these fears and inflate crude oil prices beyond reasonable levels. This creates a snowball effect and consumers ultimately pay the price at the pump.”

The Prevent Unfair Manipulation of Prices or PUMP Act, would require over-the-counter traders to report to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, just as on-market traders already do. This increased oversight would improve confidence in the market and help eliminate the unreasonable inflation of crude oil prices. Recent reports have determined the regulation of trading could lower the price of a barrel of crude oil by \$20 and lower your cost at the pump. The legislation would also increase penalties for traders found to be unfairly manipulating the oil futures market.

The President has announced his attempt to reduce gas prices by, among other things, suspending purchases of petroleum for the nation’s Strategic Petroleum Reserve. “The President’s moves may be too little, too late,” said Stupak. Republicans have a majority in the House, and Senate, as well as the Presidency. If they really wanted to bring immediate relief for consumers at the pump, they would swiftly move my two bills.”



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*Bart Stupak*  
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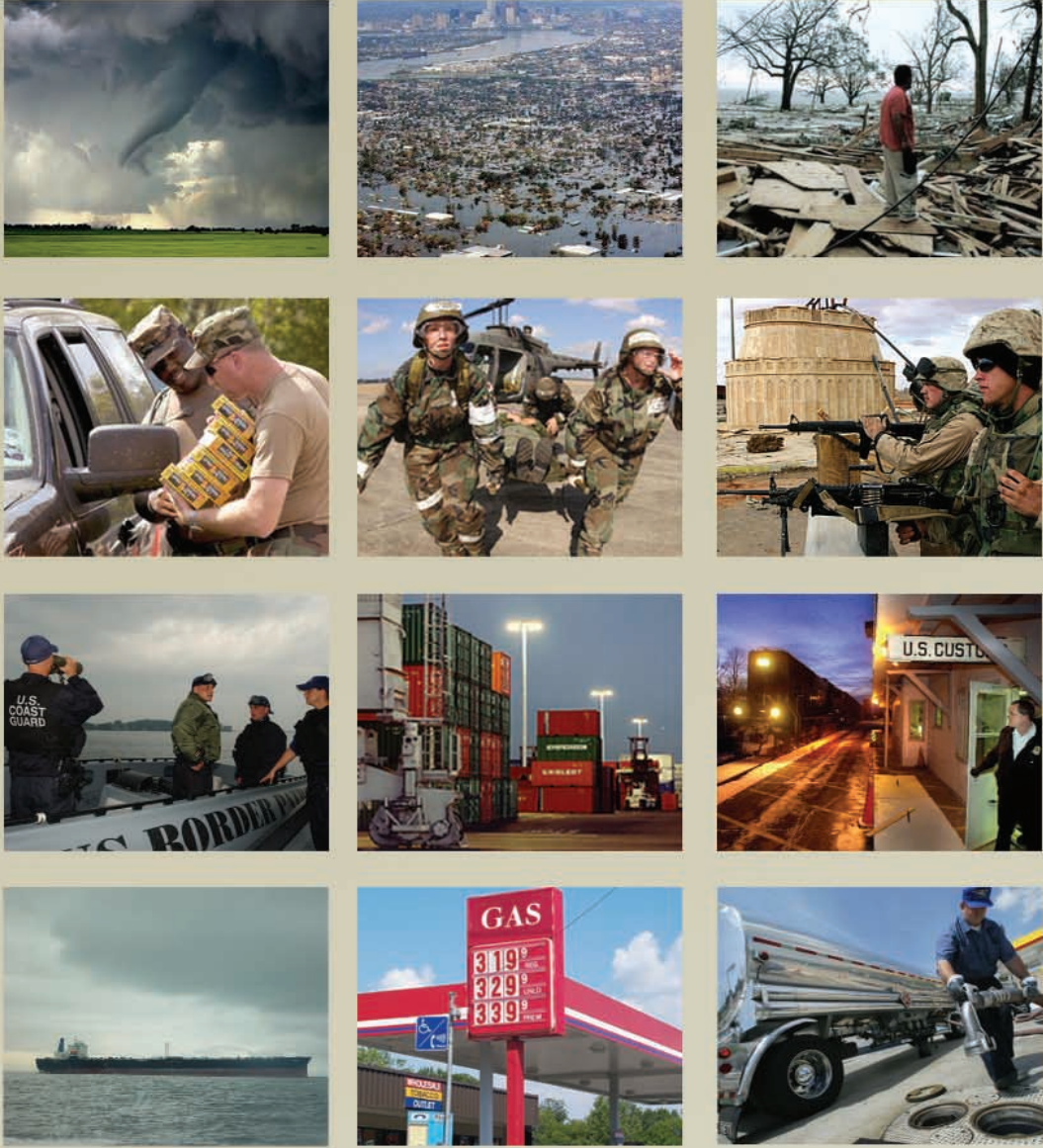
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## A Special Report from Congressman Bart Stupak

Prepared and published at taxpayer expense and provided for the information of 1st Congressional District constituents.

# The first responsibility of our government is the security of every American.

In this era of unprecedented and unpredictable challenge, we must be prepared for any threat.

The men and women of America’s armed forces and those on the front lines here at home have met every challenge with skill, bravery and selfless dedication. They, along with veterans, military retirees and the families of those who have given their lives or have been wounded, deserve the gratitude and support of the American people. We will always honor their service and fulfill our promises to them.



Congressman Stupak participates in Operation Scarlet Shield, a mock homeland security exercise, at the National Defense University with Assistant Secretary of Defense William Winkenwerder and others.

America is best protected, and freedom best advanced, by national security policies – including homeland, energy and diplomatic strategies – that are both tough *and* smart.

A plan for REAL SECURITY must rebuild our military; equip and train our first responders and others on the front lines here at home; provide needed benefits to our troops, their families and veterans; fully equip the National Guard and Reserve; promote alternative fuels and reduce dependence on foreign oil; and restore Americans’ confidence in their government’s ability to respond in the face of a terrorist attack or natural disaster.

To protect the American people, the recommendations of the independent bipartisan 9/11 Commission must be immediately implemented to finally protect our ports and airports, our borders, our mass transit systems, our chemical and nuclear power plants, and our food and water supplies from terrorist attack.

After September 11, all Americans trusted President Bush to take the steps necessary to keep our country safe. Since then, inadequate planning and incompetent policies have failed to make Americans as safe as we should be. The tragedy of Hurricane Katrina showed that the federal government was still not prepared to respond to a natural disaster.

Under the current administration, the war in Iraq began with bad intelligence and no plan for success; our ports and other critical infrastructure remain vulnerable, while both troops in the field and first responders at home lack the equipment and resources they were promised. In both the Persian Gulf and our own Gulf Coast, lucrative no-bid contracts and inept management have undermined public confidence. And despite record fuel prices, dependency on foreign oil remains high as America’s energy policy favors big oil companies.

Americans want and deserve a plan for REAL SECURITY that will protect our families and restore America’s position of international leadership.

## Bill to Remove FEMA from Department of Homeland Security Introduced

As the ranking member on the House Energy and Commerce Committee’s Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Congressman Bart Stupak joined several colleagues in touring hurricane damage and recovery efforts in New Orleans and Southern Mississippi in late January. “Hurricane Katrina and her aftermath killed 1,321 people. It is estimated that about 2 million people were displaced and more than \$150 billion in damage was caused,” Stupak said. “Testimonies from management, witnesses and even staunch supporters of the President are calling it as they see it – the Administration had the information they needed to prevent much of the outcome and failed miserably. It is sad to think that some of the deaths could have been avoided with better planning, coordination and notification. We need to separate FEMA from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and within the new FEMA we need leaders with specialized training to handle natural disasters not political opportunities.”

In September 2005, immediately following the devastation caused by Katrina and the subsequent mismanaged response, Congressman John Dingell introduced legislation to remove FEMA from under DHS. Stupak signed onto the bill as an original co-sponsor. Under the proposed legislation, disasters like Hurricane Katrina would be better managed by an independent agency focused solely on emergency response and assistance.

The bill would move FEMA out from under DHS to an independent department where the top executive would have cabinet-level accountability and report directly to the President. The bill would also create two deputy administrators; one assigned to man-made disasters and the other assigned to natural disasters. Each would be required to have significant experience related to their positions. Dingell criticized DHS for “shifting FEMA’s focus and funding to terrorism at the expense of natural disaster management.”



## Time for Iraqi Self Governance

Four years ago this fall, Congress was struggling with a very difficult decision; whether to authorize the President to send our men and women into combat in Iraq. As I struggled with my decision, I listened to constituents, attended briefings at the Capitol and the Pentagon by Secretary Rumsfeld, and met with President Bush at the White House to discuss my concerns.

Based on legal and moral principles, I believe that war with another country should only be declared if:

- if a nation directly attacks your country;
- if another nation is an accomplice in an attack on your country;
- if there is an immediate, imminent pending attack on your country; and,
- finally, if there is defiance of the international community.

It was clear that none of these principles had been met.

This war has destroyed much of the infrastructure in Iraq, killed 30,000 Iraqi civilians, created a rallying charge for Islamic extremists, cost our nation more than \$200 billion, and resulted in the death of more than 2,400 U.S. troops and injured to more than 17,500.

What have we received in return? A frightening number of Iraqis feel it is ok to kill US soldiers. Insurgent attacks have increased more than 4 fold over the past year. Iraqi oil production, which was supposed to fund the reconstruction efforts, is BELOW the level of production before we invaded the country, and the United States has record high gas prices, deficits, and debt. We are being asked to continue to pay for the war and reconstruction in Iraq, while cutting funding for food stamps, student loans, Medicaid, and other programs here at home.

After months of internal squabbling, the Iraqi Parliament has selected new leadership for their country. Now is the time to tell the Iraqi people and their new leaders that Iraq must

become self sufficient. Iraqis must take control of their country and the United States military will assist them for only a short while longer. However, it has been more than 3 years since the fall of Baghdad and it is time for the Iraqis to take over. Therefore, I am calling on President Bush to implement a plan to withdraw our troops from Iraq within one year. The United States has provided the Iraqi people with regime change and assisted them in creating a new framework for democratic government. We have sacrificed with blood, sweat, tears. American families have given their sons, daughters, mothers and fathers so the Iraqis can have a democratic future. It is time that the Iraqis take over control of their country so our nation can focus on domestic issues. Our troops who have been deployed, have honorably served our country and it is time for them to return to their families.



In July 2004, the independent, bipartisan 9/11 Commission submitted to Congress and the nation a report containing 41 recommendations on how to improve intelligence operations and homeland security. In December 2004, Congress enacted the Intelligence Reform Act (or “the 9/11 Act”) authorizing several of these recommendations.

However, the administration has so far failed to live up to the commitments made in the 9/11 Act. Almost every single recommendation has been significantly underfunded. In addition, there has been a severe lack of leadership and competency at the Department of Homeland Security – culminating in the failed response to Hurricane Katrina.

On December 5, 2005, when the 9/11 Commission issued its final report card, it gave the administration a series of C’s, D’s, and F’s on many areas in homeland security. These areas include port security, border security, aviation security, chemical plant security, and first responders.

Congressman Bart Stupak believes that the government’s most important responsibility is to “provide for the common defense” and urges a full and immediate implementation of the 9/11 Commission’s recommendations that would:

- secure national borders, ports, airports and mass transit systems,
- screen 100% of containers and cargo bound for the U.S. in ships or airplanes at the point of origin and safeguard America’s nuclear and chemical plants, and food and water supplies,
- prevent outsourcing of critical components of our national security infrastructure – such as ports, airports and mass transit– to foreign interests that put America at risk,
- provide firefighters, emergency medical workers, police officers and other workers on the front lines with the training, staffing, interoperability, equipment and cutting-edge technology they need,
- protect America from biological terrorism and pandemics including Avian flu by investing in the public health infrastructure and training public health workers.

